

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 05068 01 OF 03 221803Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 221748Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6715
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 05068

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PGOV WB UK GW US UK FR GE
SUBJECT: FRENCH VIEWS ON RECENT GDR ACTIONS AFFECTING
BERLIN

REFS: (A) STATE 61229 NOTAL; (B) STATE 40753;
(C) PARIS 413

BEGIN SUMMARY. CONCERNED OVER THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF
RECENT GDR MEASURES AFFECTING EAST BERLIN, THE FRENCH
EMBASSY IN BONN HAS RECOMMENDED A FREEZE OF SORTS IN
GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS WITH THE GDR. THE
EMBASSY APPARENTLY HAS IN MIND THE DESIRABILITY OF
DELAYING FURTHER THE VISIT TO EAST BERLIN TO WHICH
DE GUIRINGAUD IS COMMITTED IN PRINCIPLE. THE FRENCH
BONN GROUP REP HAS SUGGESTED TO THE US AND UK REPS THAT
SUCH A FREEZE WOULD BE POSSIBLE ONLY IF THERE WERE A
CONSENSUS AMONG ALL THREE ALLIES. PRIVATELY, THE FRENCH
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REP HAS INTIMATED TO US THAT PARIS AGREES WITH THE
RECOMMENDATION AND THAT THE FRENCH MAY BE MAKING
DEMARCHES TO THAT EFFECT IN WASHINGTON AND LONDON.
REQUEST GUIDANCE FOR RESPONDING TO BE FRENCH PRESENTA-
TION HERE. END SUMMARY.

1. FRENCH THOUGHTS ON HOW TO REACT TO RECENT MEASURES

AFFECTING BERLIN HAVE BEEN SPELLED OUT IN THREE SEPARATE DISCUSSIONS OVER THE PAST WEEK -- BILATERALLY WITH THE US BONN GROUP REPS, IN A FULL BONN GROUP MEETING ON MARCH 15, AND IN A TRIPARTITE MEETING ON MARCH 16.

2. DURING A DISCUSSION OF THE RECENT SOVIET NOTES IN THE MARCH 15 BONN GROUP MEETING, THE FRENCH REP (BOISSIEU) EXPRESSED DOUBTS THAT A FORMAL REPLY WAS EITHER USEFUL OR NECESSARY, ALTHOUGH HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO A REPLY STATING THAT THE ALLIES REAFFIRMED THEIR WELL-KNOWN POSITIONS. WHAT WAS MORE IMPORTANT, BOISSIEU SAID, WAS WHAT THE ALLIES PLANNED TO DO ABOUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, AND NOT HOW MANY NOTES WE WROTE.

3. IN A WELL PRESENTED ANALYSIS, BOISSIEU STATED THAT ALLIED RIGHTS WERE BEING MORE AND MORE CHALLENGED. ALTHOUGH THE PROCESS IN WHICH THE SOVIETS AND THE GDR ARE ENGAGED MAY BE A SLOW ONE, IT COULD REACH THE POINT OF CONTESTING DIRECTLY THE RIGHTS OF THE THREE POWERS. THOUGH HE SAID HE HAD NOTHING SPECIFIC TO PROPOSE, HE RAISED THE QUESTION OF HOW THE PROCESS COULD BE STOPPED.

4. BOISSIEU SUGGESTED IT WAS NECESSARY TO CONSIDER THE MEANING AND PURPOSE OF PRESERVING THE STATUS OF BERLIN SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GDR AND OF DIPLO-MATIC RELATIONS WITH IT BY THE THREE POWERS. HE ANSWERED HIS RHETORICAL QUESTION BY NOTING THAT IT WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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NECESSARY TO INSIST THAT THE SAME STATUS CONTINUED TO APPLY TO ALL FOUR SECTORS IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THREE PRINCIPLES:

-- THAT IT IS THE SOVIETS, AND NOT THE GDR, WHO REMAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL MATTERS CONCERNING WEST BERLIN, ESPECIALLY ACCESS;

-- THAT STATUS OF BERLIN AS IT APPLIES TO EAST BERLIN AMOUNTS TO CERTAIN SERVITUDES IMPOSED ON THE GDR; AND

-- THAT THE GDR HAS NO COMPETENCE TO QUESTION OR NEGOTIATE THOSE SERVITUDES.

5. IN BOISSIEU'S VIEW, THOSE THREE POINTS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR SURVIVAL OF WEST BERLIN. IF WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE GDR HAS ANY RIGHTS IN THIS REGARD, WE ARE EMBARKING

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----221840Z 042123 /45

R 221748Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6716
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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ON A COURSE THAT COULD BE DISASTROUS FOR WEST BERLIN.

6. BOISSIEU CONTINUED THAT EVENTS OF THE LAST FOUR MONTHS HAD NOT CHANGED THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SERVITUDES (AND THAT IT WAS THEREFORE HARD TO BRAND THE GDR ACTIONS AS "VIOLATIONS"). BUT WHILE THE GDR HAD NOT BROUGHT ABOUT CHANGES, IT HAD ESTABLISHED ITS COMPETENCE IN THE AREA BY ASSERTING THAT IT WAS THE ONLY ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND WAS SOVEREIGN IN THE EASTERN SECTOR OF BERLIN. THESE ACTIONS TOUCH ON ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT POINTS OF THE STATUS OF BERLIN. IF WE ACCEPT GDR COMPETENCE IN THIS AREA, WE WILL BE IN A MUCH MORE DIFFICULT POSITION TO REACT WHEN THE GDR QUESTIONS THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SERVITUDES.

7. IN THE FOLLOWING DAY'S TRIPARTITE MEETING, BOISSIEU ASKED WHETHER THE UK AND US REPS EXPECTED THAT BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE GDR COULD BE OR WOULD BE AFFECTED BY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND, IF SO, IN WHAT WAY.

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8. UK REP (CARTER) WAS HESITANT, STATING ONLY THAT THERE WAS NO AUTOMATIC LINKAGE BETWEEN EVENTS IN BERLIN AND THE STATE OF UK-GDR RELATIONS. US REP STATED, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT THERE HAD BEEN A SLOWDOWN IN BILATERAL RELATIONS AS A RESULT OF RECENT EVENTS AND -- DRAWING FROM PARA 10, REF (B) -- MENTIONED THE STEPS WHICH THE US HAD TAKEN TO IMPRESS UPON THE SOVIETS AND THE GDR THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STATUS OF BERLIN.

9. BOISSIEU THEN MORE OR LESS PICKED UP WHERE HE HAD LEFT OFF THE PREVIOUS DAY WITH HIS ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION. STATING THAT RELATIONS HAD COOLED SOMEWHAT SINCE THE DETENTE ATMOSPHERE SURROUNDING THE SIGNING OF THE QA, HE SAID THAT EUROPE NEVERTHELESS LIVED IN A STATE OF EUPHORIA. NO ONE WOULD UNDERSTAND WHY DETENTE SHOULD BE PUT IN JEOPARDY FOR OBSCURE REASONS RELATED TO THE STATUS OF BERLIN, NOR COULD WE TAKE THE SORTS OF MEASURES IN BERLIN THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE EARLIER, BECAUSE THESE WOULD JEOPARDIZE THE GAINS WE HAD ACHIEVED IN THE QA. IN BOISSIEU'S VIEW, THE SOVIETS RECOGNIZE THAT WE WILL NOT TAKE COUNTERMEASURES, BECAUSE THE LEVEL REQUIRED WOULD BE TOO HIGH AND THIS WOULD LEAD RAPIDLY TO A DRAMATIC SITUATION.

10. MOREOVER, BOISSIEU SAID, IN A PERIOD WHEN EAST-WEST RELATIONS ARE COOLING AND THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN THE GDR IS BECOMING MORE DIFFICULT, THERE IS AN AUTOMATIC ANTAGONISM BETWEEN THE INTERESTS OF THE ALLIES IN TAKING ACTIONS TO PROTECT BERLIN AND THE INTEREST OF THE FRG IN RETAINING CONTACTS WITH THE GDR. FOR THESE VARIOUS REASONS, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHAT TO DO IN BERLIN EVEN IF WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO DO SOMETHING.

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11. THE ONLY POSSIBLE COUNTERMEASURES WHICH COULD BE TAKEN, BOISSIEU CONCLUDED, WOULD BE IN BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE GDR. THE FRENCH EMBASSY HAD ACCORDINGLY RECOMMENDED THAT THE GOF "FREEZE" RELATIONS WITH THE GDR -- POSTPONE OFFICIAL VISITS, REFRAIN FROM ENTERING INTO NEW NEGOTIATIONS, AND THE LIKE. THESE STEPS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS COUNTERMEASURES, BUT AS SORT OF GENERAL WARNING TO THE GDR.

12. BOISSIEU ADDED THAT SUCH ACTION COULD BE TAKEN, HOWEVER, ONLY IF THERE WERE A DEGREE OF CONSENSUS AMONG THE THREE ALLIES AND, IF POSSIBLE, WITH THE FRG AS WELL (ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE POSITION OF THE FRG WAS DIFFERENT). BOISSIEU THEN REFERRED TO THE PROPOSED DE GUIRINGAUD VISIT TO EAST BERLIN AS A SORT OF "DEADLINE." IT WOULD BE AWKWARD FOR THE VISIT TO TAKE PLACE IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, AS IT WOULD SUGGEST A SORT OF SCHIZOPHRENIA IN OUR POLICY.

13. ASKED BY CARTER WHETHER THE FRENCH RECOMMENDATIONS ALSO TOUCHED ON ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH THE GDR, BOISSIEU ADMITTED THAT IN MATTERS SUCH AS EXPORTS IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE GOF TO EXERCISE SIGNIFICANT CONTROL. WHAT THE EMBASSY HAD IN MIND WAS MORE IN THE FIELD OF ACTIVITIES ON THE GOVERNMENTAL SIDE.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----221839Z 042101 /45

R 221748Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6717
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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14. US REP TOOK THE OCCASION TO OUTLINE TO CARTER AND BOISSIEU THE DEPARTMENT'S COGENT ANALYSIS OF WHAT IS BEHIND RECENT EVENTS IN REF (B), ADDING THAT THE DEPARTMENT'S REASONING CAME OUT BASICALLY AT THE SAME

PLACE -- I.E., THAT THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF
DETECTING FURTHER MEASURES IN BERLIN WAS TO MAKE IT
CLEAR TO THE GDR -- BUT ALSO TO THE SOVIETS -- THAT
OUR OVERALL RELATIONSHIP CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO
FLOURISH IF TENSIONS CONTINUE TO BE CREATED IN
BERLIN.

15. COMMENT: IN A BILATERAL CONVERSATION WHICH
PRECEDED THE TRIPARTITE MEETING DESCRIBED ABOVE,
BOISSIEU TOLD EMBOFF PRIVATELY THAT PARIS HAD AGREED
WITH CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE FRENCH
EMBASSY AND WOULD PROBABLY BE MAKING DEMARCHES IN
WASHINGTON AND LONDON. PRESUMABLY SUCH DEMARCHES, IF
MADE, WILL BE AIMED AT SEEKING THE VIEWS OF THE US AND
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THE UK ON A SLOWDOWN IN BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE
GDR ALONG THE LINES DESCRIBED ABOVE.

16. SO FAR AS WE KNOW, NO DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR A DE
GUIRINGAUD VISIT. WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING ON THE SUBJECT
SINCE THE REPORT FROM EMBASSY PARIS AT THE BEGINNING
OF THE YEAR (REF C) THAT DE GUIRINGAUD PERSONALLY HAD
"NO ZEST" FOR MAKING THE TRIP. A DECISION TO POSTPONE
FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF IT AT THIS TIME WOULD THUS
PRESUMABLY FIT IN, IN ANY CASE, WITH DE GUIRINGAUD'S
PREDILECTIONS.

17. ACTION REQUESTED: IN THE LIGHT OF THE INFORMATION
IN PARA 2.E, REF (A) (RECEIVED AFTER THE ABOVE
DISCUSSIONS), WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO INFORM
BOISSIEU THAT THE USG ALSO BELIEVES THAT BILATERAL
CONTACTS AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED
AT THE PRESENT TIME. WE WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE FOR
RESPONDING MORE FULLY TO THE FRENCH PROPOSAL.
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Message Attributes

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